

Waterlines

NOTES FROM THE
MAURICE/SALEM/COHANSEY
WATERSHED STUDY

WINTER / SPRING 2002

AREA 17 WATERSHED MANAGEMENT • PLAN •



Message for The New Year

The new year. This phrase always has a special ring to it. It conjures up a vision of change for the better. During 2002, the Watershed 17 planning process will continue to move toward the goal of reviewing existing conditions and eventually making recommendations to ensure a brighter future. We will collaborate with those who live and work in Watershed 17 in order to construct a plan that will promote responsible growth, preserve our most important resources and strike a balance between competing demands in the watershed.

Looking back over the past year, we are grateful for the support we have received from so many Task Force members who have attended meetings and provided us with feedback on the process. We encourage you to continue your involvement to ensure that the final plan accurately addresses the most significant issues in the watershed.

As we enter 2002, we look forward to continuing to work together.

Wishing you peace, health and happiness in the new year!

The Watershed 17 Planning Team

Watershed 17 Task Force Meets

The Watershed Task Force met for the third time on November 29, 2001. The agenda included a presentation of the characterization information collected thus far, a review of Task Force survey (posted on our website) responses and a discussion of the formation of subcommittees. One of the Task Force's key discussions addressed how the subcommittees would be formed. A number of participants, with

experience in other large scale environmental planning projects, suggested that the subcommittees be organized around geographic areas. Several other members felt that the emphasis should be on larger issues that cut across geographic boundaries. Although the meeting concluded without resolving when and which subcommittees would be established, participants were encouraged to compile their own lists of key issues. Several factors will have a bearing on the subcommittees that are formed. These factors include the visioning process, information obtained from data collection, issues identified during the watershed characterization effort, and the level of participation of the Task Force in subcommittee selection and subsequent operation.

Raymond Ferrara, of study team member TRC Omni Environmental Corporation, presented to the Task Force via slides, an overview of the data collected to date, and still to be collected. He characterized the study as in the "getting to know you" phase. Most of the data that is currently mapped was obtained from local and state sources as well as the



USGS, EPA and study team in-house databases. All data is being entered into and mapped with a Geographic Information System (GIS) using the ARCVIEW computer software program. The data base will be very comprehensive and will include numerous information parameters, including, among others, political jurisdictional boundaries, roads, land use, surface water bodies, water quality data, discharge locations, open space, tidal influence, etc. Once all available data has been recorded in the database, it will be possible to isolate individual areas and compile information and specific combinations of data about those areas. This database will be a tremendous resource to current and future planning efforts. Task Force members may contact the Cumberland County Department of Planning and Development with data requests.

Comprehensive minutes of the Task Force meeting are posted on the Watershed 17 web site at www.perksreutter.com/ccwatershed

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The following web sites may be of interest to Watershed 17 participants. When surfing the web, check them out!

To learn about watersheds, visit www.epa.gov/owow/watershed/ on the Internet.



EPA recently released an Interagency Report on Status, Trends and Initiatives in Watershed Management. For a copy of the report visit

<http://www.epa.gov/owow/protecting/>



For information about safe drinking water check out www.epa.gov/safewater/arsenic.html



EPA released recommendations from the National Watershed Forum. To view them visit <http://www.epa.gov/owow/forum>

Have You Seen It?

The recently completed Watershed 17 brochure is now available. The brochure provides notable information about Watershed 17 and describes key components of the Watershed Management Plan study effort. Single or multiple copies are available for individuals or for distribution to groups, and can be obtained from the Cumberland County Department of Planning and Development at 856.453.2175, or from Perks Reutter Associates at 856.488.6200. The brochure can also be viewed on our website at www.perksreutter.com/ccwatershed

The Results Are In!

Task Force Responds to Planning Survey

In November, the study team released an 18-question survey that is designed to elicit feedback on a range of issues related to the Watershed 17 planning study. Respondents were asked to comment on the significance of the issues in the Watershed and also on the organization and structure of the Task Force. Surveys were sent to all members of the Task Force. To date, 25 percent of the surveys were returned. Survey returns are still being accepted.

The highlights of the survey are as follows:

- Protecting the quality of drinking water was listed by most respondents as their most important concern.
- The issues most often identified as contributing to the quality of life in the watershed are parks and open space, public access to the waterfront and the availability of historic buildings and other cultural facilities.

■ The Maurice River is the water body most respondents associate with in WMA 17.

■ Generally, existing development is felt to be adequate.

■ In response to an open-ended question that asked which issues the study should address, respondents listed water quality and supply, wastewater disposal, runoff, eutrophication, lake management, ground water contamination and the scenic status of the Maurice River.

■ Respondents felt that the conflict in water uses that should be addressed are: developers v. environmentalists, agriculture v. industry and agriculture v. recreation.

Task Force Survey responses are being compiled and will be posted on our web site. Haven't completed a survey? If you are a Task Force member and would like to submit a survey, it's not too late. Visit our web site or contact Perks Reutter Associates at 856.488.6200.

What Is A Visioning Process?

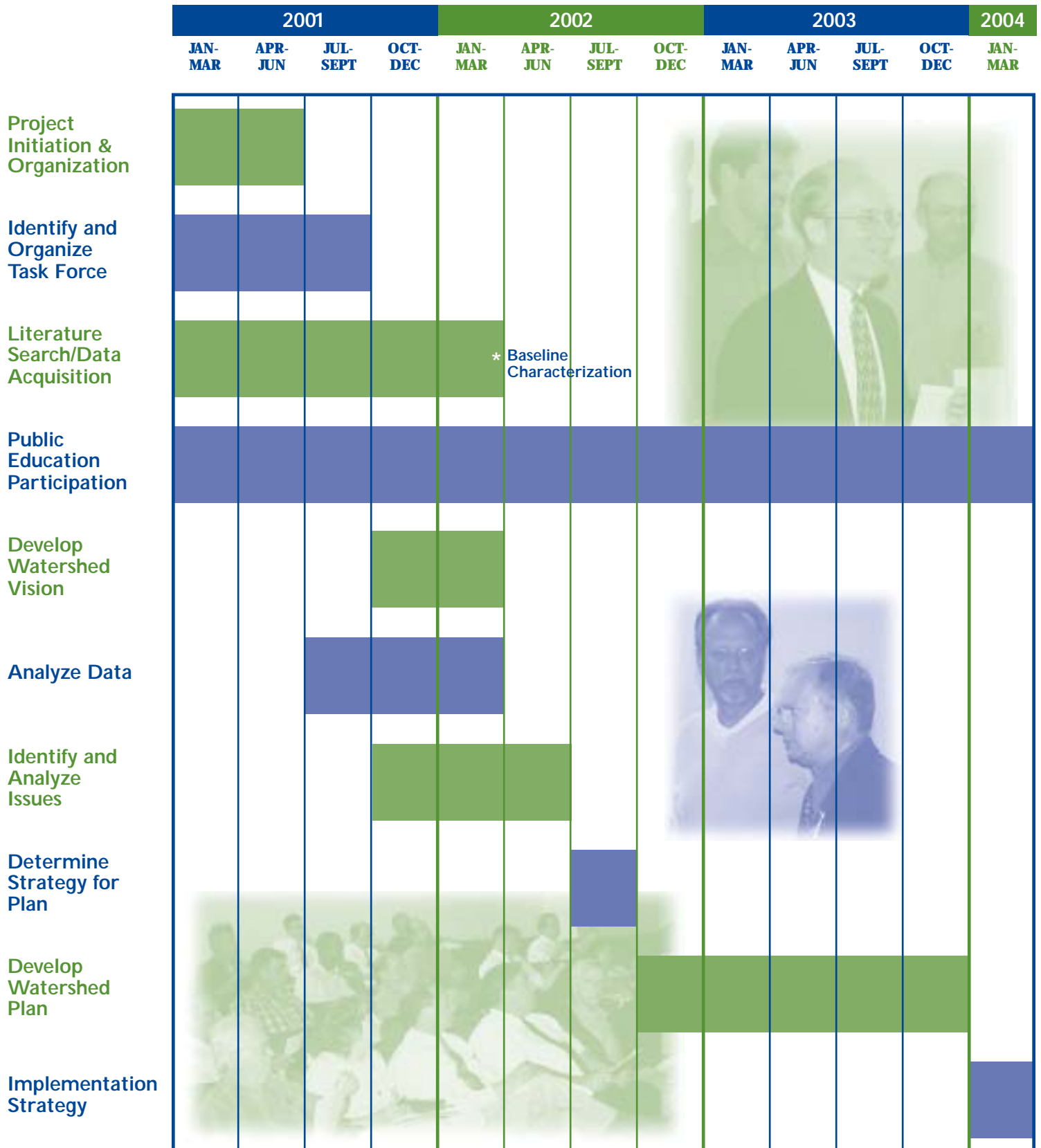
In a watershed as large and as diverse as Watershed 17, reaching an agreement about the watershed's most significant issues when dealing with participants who represent diverse interests can be like walking a tight rope. However, it is exactly this diversity of representation that leads to a better understanding of the concerns and issues that confront the watershed. In establishing the Task Force, the study's organizers took great pains to ensure that a full range of views were represented. Because of this diversity, Task Force members may not always agree with each other's opinions, but there is often a thorough discussion of the issues. The visioning process has become a useful tool to help communities plan for the future and balance the range of issues that may arise during the planning process.

The visioning process will provide Task Force members an opportunity to review and discuss issues and data. Visioning

encourages participants to identify what they like about their community and how they would like it to look and feel in the future. The "vision" results from discussions that focus on what participants value as well as what they would like to change or preserve. A typical visioning process includes discussions about where we are now, where we are going, where do we want to be and how do we get there? A visioning process may include initial directed discussions within small groups. Once the small groups reach—or try to reach—consensus on the issues, the results are brought to the larger group and the discussion process begins again. These discussions ensure that the issues are narrowed down to a manageable number, and lend more focus to the planning process. Plans are underway to organize a visioning process that will be conducted in late winter or early spring.

Watershed Management Area 17

PROJECT SCHEDULE



Did You Know...

■ President Bush will include \$21 million in the 2003 budget for a new EPA initiative to protect, preserve and restore waterways across the country. The effort was recently announced by EPA Administrator Christie Whitman. According to Whitman, up to 20 of the country's most highly-valued watersheds will be targeted to receive grants. For more information on these grants, go to:
<http://www.epa.gov/owow/watershed/>

■ As of 2001 there were 12 active bald eagle nests in Cumberland and Salem Counties, plus three additional "territorial" pairs. Cumberland County led all counties with eight active pairs in 2001. The eagles can be viewed from Stow Creek in Canton.



Watershed Area 17 Planning Study

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